

THE CEA CRITIC

Formerly THE NEWS LETTER of the College English Association

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December, 1955

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The National CEA Sessions

Palmer House	December 27-29	Chicago, Illinois
CEA Headquarters	8th Floor	
	Summary Schedule	
Tues., Dec. 27 (All Tues. sessions, except breakfast, in Illinois Room)		
8:30- 9:45 a.m.	Room 1, Breakfast, Nat. Officers & Directors	
	Meeting with Regional Leaders	
10:30-11:00 a.m.	Registration	
11:00-12:00 n.	Business Meeting	
12:00- 1:30 p.m.	Luncheon*	
	Message - CEA President-Elect	
	Greetings - Gwin Kolb, President, Chicago CEA	
2:00- 3:30 p.m.	Program	
4:00- 5:00 p.m.	Cocktails	

*Those planning to attend the luncheon should place reservations as soon as they can with Miss Catherine Ham, Department of English, University of Chicago, 1050 East 59th Street, Chicago 57, Illinois. Accompanying remittance should be made payable to: Catherine Ham. Non-CEA members are welcome. Tickets will be required. Luncheon price, \$3.50 (all charges included). Reserved luncheon tickets may be picked up from Miss Ham in the Illinois Room during registration.

PROGRAM

(Tues. Afternoon - Illinois Room)

Theme: Teaching Translations

Presiding: Maurice B. Cramer

Professor and Chairman of Humanities in the College, University of Chicago

Speakers:

Bernard Schilling Professor of English, University of Rochester

Knox C. Hill

Associate Professor of Humanities in the College, University of Chicago

John Ciardi

Lecturer in English, Rutgers University

Program Committee

Bruce Dearing, Swarthmore College

Donald J. Lloyd, Wayne University

Norman Holmes Pearson, Yale University.

Henry W. Sams, University of Chicago (Chairman)

Committee on Arrangements

Gwin J. Kolb, University of Chicago

Catherine Ham, University of Chicago

David Clark, University of Massachusetts

LOCAL HOST COMMITTEE FOR DECEMBER MEETING

Irving D. Blum, Department of English, University of Illinois, Chicago Branch

C. Hobart Edgren, Department of English, Elmhurst College

Miss Catherine Ham, Department of English, University of Chicago

Marvin Laser, Department of English, Chicago Teachers College

Thomas J. Sandke, Department of English, Roosevelt University

Sister Mary Aquinas, Department of English, Rosary College

Martin J. Svaglic, Department of English, Loyola University

Philip H. Vitale, Department of English, DePaul University

Samuel K. Workman, Department of English, Illinois Institute of Technology

Gwin J. Kolb, Department of English, University of Chicago, chairman

From PMLA's "For Members Only": "Job Mart . . . Members should note carefully that MLA is not opening a year-around placement service; for this, members in English may turn to the College English Association."

Bureau Of Appointments At Chicago

The CEA Bureau of Appointments is maintained by Albert Madeira (Box 472, Amherst, Mass.) as a service to CEA members. The only charge, in addition to national CEA membership, is \$5.00 for a twelve-month registration. Registrants who are not CEA members should include with their registration fee the annual membership fee of \$3.50—\$1.00 for dues and \$2.50 for subscription to the CEA Critic. Registration does not guarantee placement. Prospective employers are invited to use the services of the CEA Bureau of Appointments. (No charges.)

Bureau Registrants planning to be available for interviews in Chicago during the annual sessions should inform Albert Madeira at once. As soon as possible, they should let the Bureau know where they may be reached while in Chicago. If they are in doubt as to the status of their registration, they should ask that this be checked by the Bureau. Chicago Office, December 27-29, at the Palmer House.

From Principle To Practice

Ed. Note: The following statement from Prof. Alvan S. Ryan (Notre Dame), Chairman, to the members of his CEA Committee on Ph.D. Curriculum and Preparation for Teaching is so informative and stimulating that, with the author's permission, we now share it with our full membership. Critic readers are urged to respond, themselves, to Prof. Ryan's final request.

TEACHING TRANSLATIONS SQUATTER'S RIGHTS?

Regarding the program of the annual meeting, Norman Holmes Pearson writes: "The problem that has always interested me is the problem of English teachers who are called on or feel drawn to include masterpieces originating in some other culture than the English or American fields in which they have been trained . . .

"On the whole, ill-trained as we are both in the original languages and the backgrounds of such classics, we do not shy away; though certainly, we would be suspicious of anyone who in a French course taught Shakespeare in translation, or T. S. Eliot in Italian. Nor do we like to think that instructors in any other literature than English are suited to teach these introductory survey courses."

When I agreed to serve as chairman of our CEA committee on "The Ph.D. Curriculum and Preparation for Teaching", I told Max Goldberg that I would consider my chief function to be that of expediting the exchange of opinion among the committee members and trying to define our agreements.

With twelve of us on the committee, and meetings of the entire committee almost out of the question, I will try to do all I can do to circulate the comments of each member to all the others, and to do so as quickly as possible. We are expected, as you know from Max's letter of Sept. 19, to have a report ready for the Dec. 27th meeting. This need be no more than an interim report. I hope that we can go on with our work and have a final report ready by the end of the academic year.

Review

Perhaps, to begin with, we should consider the status of our committee with reference to what (Continued On Page 6)

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting of the College English Association Inc., will be held in the Illinois Room, the Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, on Tuesday, December 27, 1955. The business session will begin at 11:00 a.m. National CEA President Kathrine Koller (University of Rochester) will preside.

Maxwell H. Goldberg
Executive Secretary

South College, Univ. of Mass., Amherst

THE CEA CRITIC

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"English Without Frontiers"

In an article with the above title in *The New York Times* magazine section for Dec. 4, Edwin T. Cornelius, Jr., U. S. Information Agency's field consultant on English-speaking activities, describes the tremendous demand for English which now exists throughout the world, making English a truly international language.

Of special interest is his description of the teaching methods used. After a careful analysis of the native tongue, decisions are made concerning the order and emphasis to be given to the learning of vowel sounds, intonation, stress, word order, and construction. All instruction is on the conversational level, and the students can apply their knowledge outside class from the first week on.

A great merit of effective language instruction is that it breaks down barriers to understanding and to the free exchange of information and wins converts to democracy. "People of all nationalities have learned the words "freedom," "liberty," "independence." And for many, the first notions of the meaning of these words have come from a vocabulary lesson in an English classroom."

Chaucer on Records

The Spoken World, Inc., 10 East 39 Street, N. Y. 16 has issued LP recordings of six of The Canterbury Tales in the Nevill Coghill translation into modern verse. Read by outstanding stars of British stage and radio, these dramatized productions preserve the charm and lilt of the original verse.

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Jibberings of an Old Ghost

Among the leaders of our nation was evidently in closer contact with Omniscience Itself than were Moses and Jeremiah and the rest of the prophets. All opinion was fact and all fact was final.

I am not pleading for textbooks which offer to the young only hesitant statements and qualified assertions. But I do urge that learners have a right to know which alleged facts are on the hardly established frontiers of man's knowledge and still only half revealed History and Philosophy and Economics and Theology and Archiology are overflowing with hypotheses which challenge the intellect but the grand manner turns them into dull finalities.

For a book needs to be argued with, just as a teacher needs to be argued with, either tacitly or aloud, in order to have any seeds planted in the mind. It is only through discussion with another person or with a book or with oneself, that the mind is fed.

In a way, all real education must be "self-education". For education is not something which is poured into a student by an old pewter pitcher in an academic gown. The student must do more than merely receive it in a notebook; there must be some process of gestation.

I knew of a teacher in my youth who had written a really good textbook; but thereafter his teaching consisted of a series of lectures in which he dictated the contents of that book to his students who were expected to take it all down in their notebooks, and later repeat it parrotwise on their examination papers. As a teacher, when he wrote that book he had struck twelve and stopped. He needed re-winding.

Any textbook needs a good teacher far more than a good teacher needs any textbook. But a good teacher with a good textbook is a powerful combination. Too often a textbook, whether it is good or not, is only a crutch for a lame teacher; and I have known it to be a wheel-chair in which the lazy teacher rides in and out of the classroom with the students running alongside.

Textbooks too often reflect a state of mind easily acquired by teachers and preachers — an affectation of omniscience — in which hypotheses are always presented as final truths. It does not allow for a difference of opinion or encourage a weighing of alternatives. There is another name for the sort of attitude I mean; I learned it years ago from Henry Mencken when he was editing the *American Mercury*. He had returned a manuscript saying that he liked it, but that it lacked the "grand manner", and he asked me to revise it, enclosing proof-sheets of a forthcoming article to illustrate what he meant. I caught his meaning at once, for that other contributor

was evidently in closer contact with Omniscience Itself than were Moses and Jeremiah and the rest of the prophets. All opinion was fact and all fact was final.

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Let me illustrate with two textbook assertions from our field of English Literature: "Mark Twain was so combed and groomed by his marriage and social responsibilities that his genius never fully flowered." "O. Henry, unfortunately never attempted a full-length novel because he was by nature and temperament incapable of such sustained effort."

I should like to say to all students who are expected to accept such statements and return them on an examination paper that neither statement is a fact, but merely an opinion, and to my mind an incompetent one. Then let the student weigh our conflicting claims. One need only read some of the cheap slap-stick humor of Mark Twain's early days and compare it with the product of his riper years. His hands were never stopt nor his mouth gagged by social restrictions, but increasing he came to realize that creating real literature was a discipline art. As for O. Henry, he was not stopt from "sustained effort" by lack of ability but by lack of funds. More than once, when he had an extended plot partially outlined in his mind he would receive an appeal from a magazine editor for another of his short stories and a check would be enclosed. He would spend the money and own the story, and the only way he could quickly square the account would be by putting a snap-ending on the tale he had just begun, and then have to start all over again.

In his latter years my whimsical cousin and close friend, Gelett Burgess, became intrigued by the arguments of a little group of British scholars who believe they have solved the "Shakespeare enigma" by nominating the Earl of Oxford. They argue that he was a favorite of Elizabeth and a patron of the theater. One of the folios was dedicated to him; he was a poet, he had traveled in Italy and Denmark,

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THE IC COURSES IN ENGLISH AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

(Paper read at the Oct. 15, 1955, session of the New England College English Association at the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont)

There is no need to quote Shakespeare on the inefficacy of names, but you may find it significant that the title of the program of courses now referred to at Brown as IC Courses was once—and still is officially—The Identification and Criticism of Ideas. The official title was soon, almost immediately, reduced to initials. If I mourn occasionally for the original title, a trifle grandiose, perhaps, but nevertheless precisely descriptive, my mourning is tempered by the relief I feel in not having to listen to students referring to Soc, Sci, and Hum, the three branches of a program called Gen Ed.

In short, I don't much care what we call the IC program at Brown. I like it in theory and I like it in practice. But before my enthusiasm reduces me to an inarticulate stammer, I should tell you what the courses are, and I should also warn you that I have some reservations about them. The reservations will come later; the "why" and the "what" will come now.

Vitality Was Lacking

And the basic difficulty in discussing the "why" of the IC program lies in the fact that the words he had studied medicine, and his coat-of-arms was a mounted knight shaking a spear.

What turmoil and rioting and running about among grand-mannerists in academic circles would occur if some real supporting evidence were suddenly discovered! But I am thinking not so much about that delightful possibility as about the fact that Gelett's little group of Oxford backers found it so difficult to persuade any American college to give their scholarly representative a platform hearing. However fantastic the claim might seem to entrenched Shakespearian scholars, they should know that even a fantastic argument brings about mental agitation and circulation of the blood in occipital areas.

But getting back to textbooks, since I am no longer favored by beneficent publishers with a stream of the latest samples flowing onto my shelves, I can only stop my school-boy neighbors as they pass my home returning from high school and borrow their books for an hour. As a result I have collected a long list of grand-mannerisms from approved textbooks, each of which if not obviously false is highly debatable. By thus sowing seeds of distrust in the mind of the book's young owner I may have sent him back to his classroom with a newly aroused interest, and therefore in a fair way to begin acquiring an education.

Burges Johnson

you must use are words that Madison Avenue and Hollywood have conspired to make suspect. The words are challenge, vitality, enrichment; the words are horizon, achievement, satisfaction. And yet those words contain, in essence, the answer to the question, "Why?"

People, too many people, felt that the basic program for the Freshman and Sophomore years lacked vitality. It did not provide the good student with a challenge. Too often it tended to repeat the preparatory work of the secondary schools. Its horizon was often limited. The good student was often bored, for he achieved nothing that would give him satisfaction.

The situation was, of course, not that bad. Fortunately, it never is. In order to prove a point, the academic profession can resort to hyperbole as neatly and as well as the American soldier or the American press agent. But some change was desirable; indeed some change is always desirable. And that is one of the reasons why the IC courses came to the Brown campus.

Little Fanfare

Conceived by the late Bruce Macmillan Bigelow, Vice-President of Brown, fostered by Henry M. Wriston, and, let us now be very practical, nurtured by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, they arrived with little fanfare and less fuss. The program was, if anything, undersold to faculty and student body alike. This was frankly an experiment, and any experiment has a slightly better chance of success if it is conducted by volunteers, rather than draftees.

The Faculty was asked to submit courses that might be offered under the program. The response was adequate, and from the submitted courses some fourteen were accepted by the Curriculum Committee, two of them from the Department of English. These selected courses were made available to the top 50% of the Freshman class entering in the Fall of 1953 and to the top 50% of the class that would be Sophomores in the Fall of 1953.

Enthusiastic Response

The response was very enthusiastic: so enthusiastic, as a matter of fact, that additional sections were needed, additional instructors were needed. These additions were of some concern to the Administration, for it had as an ideal that each instructor would teach his own course, and each section of his course would be limited strictly to twenty students.

As in so many matters, the Administration proposes and the Faculty disposes. Most instructors

looked with horror on the possibility of teaching three or even two sections of the same course. A form of passive resistance accomplished the Faculty's aim in this matter. With a few notable exceptions, each instructor taught one section of his course. Other instructors, sympathetic to the aims of the proposed course, taught the rest.

Teaching Problems

Let me admit, here and now, that my personal bias in this matter may be coloring—I should say, is coloring—my remarks. To teach two sections of a lecture course is, I have always felt, bad enough, but

these courses were discussion groups and, or so it seemed to me, the instructor would be haunted, while meeting with the second section, by the uncanny feeling that he had been there before, or by the even worse feeling that he had said that before to the same group.

The original fourteen courses have proliferated: seventeen courses were offered in 1954-55, and twenty-four are being offered this year. The English Department offered two courses, one in English Literature and one in American Literature, during the first

(Continued On Page 4)



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THE IC COURSES

(Continued From Page 3)

two years, and this year is offering five, three in English Literature and two in American Literature. Of course, no strict line of demarcation is drawn in these courses between American Literature and English Literature.

Basic Aims

But instead of general, all-inclusive statements, perhaps specific description of the courses in English will be desirable. If I should happen to dwell on the three of the five courses that are basically in English Literature rather than in American Literature, you will understand that I do this as a matter of knowledge and convenience, and not because of any sense of bias. Two of the IC courses in English Literature I have taught; the other was conceived by my office mate, and I could not help overhearing the cries that accompanied the birth pangs; the courses in American Literature I know only through hearsay.

But before I begin to describe the courses in the English Department, perhaps a statement about the intention of all IC courses will be in order. If this statement should happen to sound like a plagiarism from a University catalogue, I can say only that it is.

"The courses in the Identification and Criticism of Ideas focus on original sources and classic expressions of vital ideas. Some courses center about a single work, others may use several; always the emphasis will be on depth. Instead of being given the outline survey contained in the usual textbook, the student is challenged to identify and interpret the concepts and theses of the scientific, philosophic, or creative genius.

"In small discussion groups, the students analyze these ideas, examine their consistency and the principle of organization used by the author. Together they define the meaningfulness of the author's views and relate them to human experience. So that his criticism and evaluation may be mature, the student reads extensively outside the central text to see how other minds have dealt with the same problems."

You will probably be surprised when I tell you that the above statement, despite its point of origin, happens to be accurate and precise. Whatever else I have to say will be merely commentary.

One English Course

And I begin my commentary with a discussion of English IC 1-2, a course that is named *Man's Faith and Fate*. (Just an aside, but if the titles of these courses seem slightly sententious to you, let me assure

you that the courses themselves are anything but sententious. Even if the instructor desires to make pithy and magisterial remarks, the class seldom lets him get a word in edgewise.)

The core of English IC 1-2 is the idea of man's faith and fate as presented in certain major poems of the 19th and 20th centuries. The course begins with *Tintern Abbey* despite the fact that it misses being a nineteenth-century poem by two years. Since this course, like all of the IC courses in the English department, is concerned with something more than the history of ideas, the first problem considered is the reading, the very close reading of the poem. After the close reading, the ideas found in the poem are traced in other writers, Plotinus, Newton, Locke, and Berkeley. Last in order, but not importance, emphasis is placed on technical analysis of a poem as a work of art.

Just how is all this accomplished? The instructors of the course prepared a series of topics. Each student chose one or more of the topics and prepared a brief written report on it or them. The reports were limited to 500 words and we tried, oh how hard we tried, to get through three reports during each class meeting. Since each class meeting is 50 minutes long, and no paper took more than four or five minutes to read, three papers a meeting did not seem to be too much.

Sometimes we actually got through three, sometimes on very rare occasions we got through four, but generally two papers a day were the maximum. Let me emphasize one point: the students, not the instructors, had that much to say about the content of the read papers. The topics fell into three general headings that I mentioned above: close reading, history of ideas, poetics.

Sample questions were: 1) "Write out the plain sense of lines 23-57, pointing out precisely in what three ways Nature works upon the poet." 2) "What is the 'presence' in line 94? Does Wordsworth consider it Divine? What are its attributes or powers? Compare the 'presence' with Plotinus' idea of the Deity." 3) "In what ways is the meter useful to the poet's intention? Would the ideas and feelings be just as effective if stated in prose?"

Dual Function

We emphasized the close reading and the written reports because this course was, in effect, serving a dual function: it served as a basic course in literature, and the students who took the IC courses were exempted from the course in English composition. Each time a

proficiency examination in composition was held, the student would take it until he had established proficiency. If he had not established proficiency by the beginning of his sophomore year, he then had to take the regular composition course. I do not have the precise figures, but fewer than three percent of all IC students failed to establish proficiency before the beginning of the sophomore year.

Theme and Conflict

In the discussion of *Tintern Abbey*, we emphasized the basic problem of theme as an element of poetry, and the ideas we stressed were Pantheism and sentimental naturalism. In our discussion of the second work in the course, Byron's *Manfred*, we emphasized individualism and philosophical anarchy, and tried to stress the manner in which theme may be revealed through dramatic conflict. The collateral reading included *Prometheus Bound*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, selections from Calvin's Institutes, *Doctor Faustus*, selections from Godwin's *Enquiry*, and Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*. The pattern here, as throughout the course, was that of reports and discussion.

The next work, for most students the most difficult of the course, was Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. Here the ideas stressed were humanism, the perfectibility of man and society, Utopianism. From the point of view of poetics we tried to show that dramatic conflict can be the source of lyricism and theme. The collateral reading included Plato's *Symposium*, more selections from Godwin, Condorcet's *The Progress of the Mind*, and Lenin's *The State and Revolution*.

Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, the next poem, considered the causes and effects of agnosticism and the impact of science on traditional faith. The poetic problem considered was the means of achieving unity in the long thematic poem. The collateral reading (and I should mention that all of this collateral reading was required, not merely suggested) included *The Sermon on the Mount*, and selections for Darwin, Spencer, Bagehot, and Huxley. And if you should think that we were loading the dice against religion with that line-up, I can assure you that such was neither the intention nor the effect. *The Sermon on the Mount* more than held its own.

A Breather?

About this time in the course we needed a breather, and we thought we'd take it by assigning Fitzgerald's translation of *The Rubaiyat*. The first year we taught it as a philosophical debate with Rabbi Ben Ezra, but in the second year we

dropped Browning completely. Fundamentally, we were concerned here with the problem of evaluating poetic form and philosophical content. The choice of such a well-known poem made the problem more difficult, and that was our intention. The philosophical idea was that of hedonistic fatalism, and the collateral reading included selections from Epicurus, and *The Book of Ecclesiastes*.

Perhaps I should mention at this time that all assignments after the Wordsworth sought for comparisons and contrasts with the other works read in the course. What we thought would be a breather turned out, of course, to be nothing of the kind. The real breather almost turned out to be the poem that we thought would be the most difficult of the course, Eliot's *Four Quartets*.

We thought—and we see now that the Ladies Home Journal is wrong: you may underestimate the power of a woman, but never underestimate the power of a student—that this poem would be so hard for the students that we decided to analyze the first of the Quartets, Burn Norton, in class. We did just that, but the students contributed more than their share.

We then prepared topics for the other three Quartets as we had for the other poems in the course. The poetic problem we stressed in this poem was stated as "Symbolism paradox, and ambiguity in relation to the ideas and meaning in poetry." The idea was mysticism a knowledge and as a way of life. The collateral reading ranged from Heraclitus to Aldous Huxley, and included the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Eccle-*

a witty and penetrating guide to vocabulary wealth . . .

Words:

HOW TO KNOW THEM

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sistencies again, *The Gospel according to St. John*, selections from the *Confessions of St. Augustine*, selections from *The Dark Night of the Soul* and *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* by St. John of the Cross, and selections from Freud's Civilization and its Discontents.

In Sum

Let me sum up what this course attempted, I think successfully, to do. It considered the poets' answers to these questions: What is the Nature of Man? What is the nature of Nature? What is the nature of the Power that moves in Man and Nature? What is or may be Man's conduct or fate in relation to this Power? Finally, and I cannot stress this point too much, the poems were considered as works of art, as well as vehicles for ideas.

Other English Courses

English IC 3-4, *The Problem of American Individualism*, was an inquiry into the concept of the individual in a free society. It was based on the critical reading of several major novels such as Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*, and *The Marble Faun*; Melville's *Pierre*, *Moby Dick*, and *Billy Budd*; James' *The American* and *The Ambassadors*; Dreiser's *The Financier* and *The American Tragedy*, and Faulkner's *Light in August*. Not all of these, of course, were read in any one year. Approximately five or six were read each year.

There was practically no collateral reading, but the students were given some opportunity for individual research. This course was a pure discussion course. Papers were not read in class, although five papers each semester were re-

quired. The discussion was not haphazard, and each day's discussion seemed to develop the tops for consideration on the next day. For the first three papers, the instructor assigned the topics; after that, the students devised their own.

New Courses

English IC 1-2 and IC 3-4 are, by now, the old stand-bys. They have been taught since the beginning of the program, and are now in their third year. The three courses that follow were developed by instructors who had taught in one or the other of these two courses in the two preceding years. In discussing them I shift from the unfair past tense which I have used in discussing the first two courses (I really should have been using the historical present) to the innocuous present tense, and occasionally to the hopeful future.

English IC 5-6, *The Crisis of Humanism in America*, follows, in general, the method of English IC 3-4, and the instructor maintains that he derived the idea of the course from his work in American Individualism. I do not think that I can improve on the description of the course which its developer has prepared, so I won't even try. He says that the course is "a study of literary response to the 20th century crisis in humanistic belief, centering upon a critical reading of Henry Adams' *Education*, and continuing with close study of certain verse narratives, including Bennett's *John Brown's Body*, Jeffers' *Roan Stallion*, Eliot's *Wasteland*, Frost's *A Masque of Mercy*, and Warren's *Brother to Dragons*. The course will consider (1) the causes and consequences of the apparent incapacity of humanistic belief to provide American artists with a standard of values, a code of conduct and judgment, which may be relevant to their contemporary situation, and, (2) the attempts of these artists to find values which will work in contexts where the humanistic apparently will not."

The last two English IC courses, IC 7-8, *Comedy and Laughter*, and IC 9-10, *The Voices of Poetry*, were proposed by instructors who had taught English IC 1-2. In general, they are following the method of collateral reading, reports, and discussions that IC 1-2 used. For a description of them I can do no better than quote the statements of the developers, reminding you once again that these statements are futuristic, not historic, for the courses are being taught this year for the first time.

Comedy and Laughter concerns itself with a study of the comic spirit and its manifestation in English dramatic literature by a careful examination of certain representative English comedies rang-

ing from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* to *The Dog Beneath the Skin* by Auden and Isherwood and including Jonson's *Volpone*, Congreve's *Way of the World*, Sheridan's *Rivals*, and Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*. The focus will be on English dramatic comedy. In addition, the course will consider collateral readings from literatures of other countries; from the different genres, the novel, the tale, the poem, and the essay; from theorists and critics. The plays will be studied as literary works as well as sources for the answer to three basic questions: When do we laugh? Where do we laugh? Why do we laugh?

The Voices of Poetry is "an inquiry into the nature and uses of poetry, to be begun with, and continually referred to, Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*. The discussion of this work will be amplified and guided by considerations of highly selected passages by other theorists on the functions of poetry and the modes of poetic expression, from Plato to William Empson. The discussion of every theoretical statement or position will be directed to and illustrated by the analysis of a few select and generally short poems, from the work of anonymous balladeers to that of Dylan Thomas. This course, which will be accomplished largely through daily presentation and discussion of assigned reports on specific problems in poetics, and of assigned poems, will attempt to answer such questions as these: Who or what is a poet? What does he do and why? What should he do, and for whom? How does he do what he does? Just how does this activity affect us? What does it do to us, or make us do? What good is it? How can we tell?"

Not Altogether New

So there they are. This brief discussion may give you some idea of what we are trying to do. A few general remarks and I am done. First of all, the English Department at Brown welcomed the idea of these new courses for the paradoxical reason that they were not new to us. Our honors program had always emphasized the small discussion group, and we have insisted for many years that our basic literature courses be more discussion than lecture. We welcomed them for another reason which I am safe in giving to this audience. An English teacher knows that there is no such thing as Economic Man, or Historical man, or Biological man. There is only Man, and a teacher of literature has to know all about him.

But our enthusiastic acceptance of these courses does not mean that we have cast into the scrap heap the undoubted virtues of the traditional, formal lecture. It is

interesting to note that the majority of people who teach IC courses, at least in the English Department, also teach formal lecture courses. We are fond of our IC hexagonal tables which make it impossible to determine any head or foot of the class, and which are intended to encourage the vigorous exchange of vigorous ideas. We are also fond of the podium and the lecture platform.

Reservations

I said that I had some reservations about the IC courses, but they are few and easily stated. First of all, they are, frankly, an experiment, and the experiment is still continuing. As a trained researcher, I should hesitate to be definite before all the evidence is in. Next, I wonder at the impact that these courses have had on the students, on the College, and on the Faculty (I use, you see, climactic order.) I wonder how the student will react to the formal lecture once he has had the opportunity to be his own lecturer. I think that he will react properly, but I am not yet sure. I wonder if the college can afford this method of teaching, although the administration tells us that getting the money is their business, not ours.

And with that, my reservations are done. I know that the impact on the teachers of these courses has been excellent. Speaking for myself, but I can speak for most of my colleagues, I feel refreshed when I come from an IC class, even though I frequently feel that I have been doing a balancing act on a high wire for fifty minutes. I feel that students can do almost anything you ask them to, that nothing is too hard for them if proper motivation is present.

I thought at first, but I no longer do so, that these courses would be inadequate substitutes for precise preparation for the concentrators in the department. I find in my advanced courses that the IC students write better, read better, and think better than the average. And, incidentally, we no longer take only the top 50%. We take the top two-thirds, with a sprinkling of dean-selected ringers from the lowest five percent. The department of Educational Psychology may call that five percent "controls." We call them students, and we like the way they learn.

In short, the IC courses are not a panacea; they are a method of teaching. I think the method has been, so far, a success. I hope it continues to be.

Elmer M. Blitstein
Brown University

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO LITERATURE

by DAVID DAICHES

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From Principle to Practice

(Continued From Page 1)

has already been done. In a sense, we are continuing the work of an earlier committee on "The Revision of the Ph.D. Curriculum in English", chaired by Prof. William L. Werner. The other members were Otto Birk (Colorado), Charles Coffin (Kenyon), Robert Fitzhugh (Brooklyn), Sanford Meech (Syracuse), and Emery Neff (Columbia). The report of this committee, presented and accepted at the Annual Meeting on Dec. 27, 1950, was published in the Critic for January, 1951.

To summarize very briefly, this report unanimously endorsed "the broadening of our graduate studies", echoed "the general call for training better teacher in our graduate programs", and held that "our students should learn to write clear and graceful English". While it made some suggestions as to how these aims might be achieved, it did not present a definite program. Instead, it pointed out problems and asked questions; in short, it aimed at stimulating further exchange of ideas and experience. "Our task", it concluded, is to publicize our experience in meeting special problems "so that a pattern, a standard, will emerge acceptable to most and transferable between good universities."

That the report served its purpose seems clear. Since its publication, members of CEA have been asking, so our Executive Secretary reports, that we "follow through our campaign of agitation with specific projects expressed in terms of 'implementation'". Hence the present committee. We are fortu-

nate in having Prof. Werner with us. His experience on the earlier committee should be invaluable to us in many ways.

Assessment

I have been re-reading items in the News Letter and the Critic going back to 1947, as a means of assessing what has been done. I list those I am aware of with the thought that references to these statements may now and then simplify our correspondence:

1. "The Ph.D. Should be Reformed." Remarks of Profs. Millett, Spencer, and Warren at Washington Meeting. News Letter, Feb. 1947.

2. "Ph.D. Reform — Where Lies the Danger?" Prof. Kemp Malone, News Letter, March, 1947.

3. "Ph.D. Reform." Henry S. Canby, News Letter, April, 1947.

4. "Ph.D. Reform — A Proposal." Norman Foerster, News Letter, May, 1947.

5. "The Curse of the Profession." Guy A. Cardwell, News Letter, May 1947.

6. "Outside Comments on the Ph.D." William L. Werner, News Letter, Sept., 1947.

7. "Report on Revision of Ph.D. Curriculum in 'English'." The CEA Critic, Jan., 1951.

8. "This We Are For." CEA Five Point Program, Critic, Feb., 1953. Drawn up by Robert Fitzhugh.

9. "Teaching Teachers to Teach." John Ciardi, Critic, Mar., 1953.

10. "Curricular Fictions and Realities." Henry W. Sams, Critic, March, 1953.

11. "Proposed CEA Five Point Program." Rod W. Horton, Critic, Mar., 1953.

12. "A Modest Defense". Bruce Dearing Critic, Feb., 1953.

I hope committee members will call to my attention any other contributions that will help us to clarify our problem.

Some of the comments listed above are by members of our committee. I would also call attention to Prof. Ernest Earliest's Academic Procession, Bobbs-Merrill, 1953. On pp. 283-86, 326-27, and 333 there are passages which are pertinent to our work, and which indicate Prof. Earliest's evaluation of what is wrong with Ph.D. training. Also, item #4 on the list is a condensation of an essay by Norman Foerster in The Journal of General Education, Vol. 1, No. 2, January, 1947, where his proposals for the Ph.D. are presented in more detail.

Suggestions Wanted

I would welcome suggestions as to the best method of procedure. If, for example, our aim is to recommend ways of making the Ph.D. program a more adequate preparation for undergraduate English teaching, should we perhaps be-

gin by expressing our individual judgments of the part that linguistics, literary history, and literary criticism should have in this preparation? Should we take as our starting point the graduate programs of one of the "more enlightened graduate schools"? Or should we use as a center of discussion such a statement as the final chapter in Welles and Warren, *Theory of Literature*, "The Study of Literature in the Graduate School"? What other approach do you consider feasible?

Some Propositions

Just to begin the discussion, I list a few propositions, most of which I've culled from the various CEA reports listed above. If you will return your comments pro and con on some or all of these, I shall circulate them among the committee. Obviously the "propositions," being out of context, may somewhat distort the given writer's position, so I cite the source in News Letter or Critic where possible.

1. There are five approaches with greater or less pertinence for literary studies: bibliographical, linguistic, historical-biographical, philosophical and ethical, aesthetic-critical. In most graduate schools of English, the first 3 are emphasized, the last two neglected, whereas the last two are of most importance for the English teacher. (Millett, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

2. Millett's aesthetic-critical method of graduate teaching is the most dangerous of all as preparation for undergraduate teaching. (Kemp Malone, News Letter, Mar., 1947.)

3. Every graduate student should show a constructive mastery of one of these five writers: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth. (T. Spencer, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

4. All graduate students should be required to write verse, short stories, and criticism. (T. Spencer, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

5. The foreign language requirement should not be a "reading knowledge" of French, German, and Latin as a tool for research. Instead, the candidate should be

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expected to be familiar with at least one foreign literature in the original language.

6. Courses in Anglo-Saxon and Beowulf should not be required of all Ph.D. candidates.

7. There should be a well-organized system of teaching internships for Ph.D. candidates. (Rod Horton, Critic, Mar., 1953, p. 6.)

8. Courses in teaching methods should be required.

9. There should be some system of testing and evaluating teaching ability before a candidate is awarded the Ph.D. degree. (T. Spencer, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

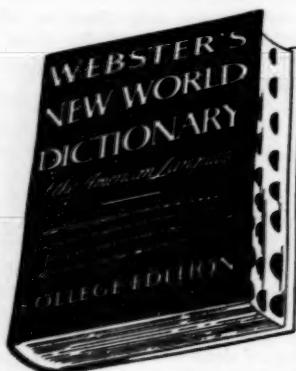
10. More opportunity should be given for study of contemporary literature on the graduate level.

11. The Ph.D. program should train "the man of letters", in the widest sense, rather than the linguist, or the research scholar. (A. Warren, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

12. A graduate program in English should include the study of philosophy.

13. The graduate program in English should include the study of some art using another medium than the word — painting, music, architecture. (Ciardi, Critic, Mar., 1953.)

14. The Ph.D. thesis should be replaced by a series of shorter studies, say editing a short work, doing a short creative piece, writing a critical essay on some contemporary whose position is not fixed. (Gohdes as reported by Werner, News Letter, Sept., 1947, p. 2.)



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15. Interdepartmental and area programs should be encouraged.

16. Since undergraduate English teachers are so often expected to teach Greek literature in translation, the Ph. D. program in English should provide for the study of Greek. (Norman Foerster, News Letter, May, 1947.)

17. Every candidate should take a course or courses in literary theory and in practical criticism. (A. Warren, News Letter, Feb., 1947.)

Would you, finally, care to present a few propositions of your own for the consideration of the committee?

Alvan S. Ryan
Chairman

156 Mercer Street
Princeton, New Jersey

Members of the Committee:
Morse Allen, Trinity College; Ellsworth Barnard, Bowdoin College; John Ciardi, Rutgers University; Ernest Earnest, Temple University; F. Cudworth Flint, Dartmouth College; Norman Foerster, 28 San Leandro Park Rd., Santa Barbara, California; Ernest Leisy, Southern Methodist University; Norman H. Pearson, Yale University; Alvan S. Ryan, Princeton, New Jersey; Lionel Stevenson, Duke University; William Werner, Pennsylvania State University; Autrey Nell Wiley, Texas State College for Women.

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WALDEN POND 1955

Shortly before reaching Walden Pond we passed a large building used for two purposes: selling rapid refreshments such as sandwiches, ice cream, coffee, cokes, and the like, and also serving as the front for a huge trailer camp. On beyond a short distance was the first of several parking lots situated on the gently sloping tree-lined hill above Walden Pond. Farther on, as Route 126 leaves the Pond, there is a more fashionable restaurant, although not too fashionable to cater to roadside service.

We were told that there was no special picnic area — no picnic tables, no fireplaces, and that, for the most part, people brought blankets and sat on the ground which served for a table, brought their own food and drinks, or obtained them at one of the two nearby restaurants. By the water's edge we consumed our sandwiches and soft drinks. Diagonally across the pond and visible in an open space among the trees, a long freight train went roaring noisily by.

After supper we toured the entire Pond, around which runs for the most part a well-traveled path two to four feet wide. The shores and sloping banks are tree-lined, and the ground is covered with a blanket of dried pine needles. Every now and then a lone fisherman, or one being encouraged by his wife, stood patiently waiting. There must be fish in the Pond, stocked, presumably, but none of the fishermen we passed seemed to be having any luck. As we walked along, an occasional glittering object off shore became on investigation discarded beer cans—the easiest and laziest way for some picnickers to dispose of them.

As we made our way around the Pond we were startled to find three young people—two boys and a girl, teen-age or not much past, the girl quite drunk—being questioned by two policemen. In the accelerated twilight under the trees we missed the "cairn and tablet on the north shore" marking "the site where Thoreau built his cabin in 1845."

Back near our starting point, we passed the bathing beach, pier, and bath houses, all being closed for the night. Swimming stops at eight o'clock at night and, in theory, the area closes then also, but fishing is permitted until ten or eleven. Two policemen patrol the area from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m., when they are replaced by others for the remainder of the night.

All in all, Walden Pond is an impressive and yet a disillusioning

sight. After we had climbed the hill and reached our car, we found a friendly policeman standing nearby. Apparently he was lonely and had been waiting for someone to talk to. He told us that on a lovely Sunday preceding our arrival some fifteen thousand people had crowded into the area. The cars, lined up bumper to bumper on the road, had overflowed all parking places. Eventually, he told us something of the seamy and sordid sides of Walden as it is today. With two shifts of policemen patrolling the

Pond, there are still numerous violators, both teen-agers and adults, of the legal and moral code.

Perhaps the fault lies with the non-casual tourist who, in anticipation, is inclined to forget that the Walden Pond of 1955 is in its way as different from the Walden Pond of 1835 as the world of 1955 is different from the world of 1845. Perhaps the sympathetic seeker may still contact the spirit of Henry David Thoreau and the Walden Pond of the past; but to the tourist that spirit remains tantalizingly vague, aloof, and invisible.

George S. Wykoff
Purdue University

Huzzas for a Humble Remonstrance

Some time ago the editor of one of our leading scholarly journals waxed between merry and indignant over the bedraggled and obviously second-hand condition in which manuscripts sometimes reach his desk. The column drew replies from a reader or two, but the world has been waiting for a full-dress pleading of the case of authors against the irresponsibility of editors, such as "A Humble Remonstrance" by Tom Burns Haber in the September, 1955, CEA Critic (pp. 4-5).

Although, having served for many years on a university publication committee, I can appreciate the value of clean copy, it seems to me that justice is entirely on Mr. Haber's side. Lest young and innocent members of the Association suppose that the "Remonstrance" may be based on hypothetical situations, or possibly on one writer's unusual bad luck, perhaps I might be permitted to document it by independent testimony.

Long Delays

Manuscripts of mine now in the offices of various journals were submitted on February 12, 1950; March 28, 1952; the middle of April, 1952; and May 24, 1952. One of them was acknowledged on receipt with a warning that there would be considerable delay; others (including the one sent in 1950) are in the hands of an editor who, in my experience, invariably acts with superhuman deliberation. Once a poem was held by a magazine so long that I had forgotten having submitted it when it suddenly turned up in print. A happy ending like that is not so bad; but what is the appropriate feeling when a contribution is held for many months, and then returned as unsuited to the journal's "present" needs?

Neatness

So much for promptness. What of neatness?

At least four manuscripts of mine have been ruined (as arti-

facts) by dog-in-manger editors who were not in the process of accepting them, and others have been more or less seriously damaged. Once the destruction took a particularly childish—if not fiendish—form: a rubber stamp designed to record the date of receipt of mail was applied to every single sheet, from the first blank one always provided for editorial comments on to the last.

Another example is a little more typical of what is likely to happen.

Some two years ago I sent to an established scholarly journal an article falling within its special field of interest; the manuscript was held for a year and a half and then returned. Meanwhile, the editor had given it a businesslike treatment. For example, the first paragraph was marked for the insertion of a marginal capital by the printer. A singular verb with a subject formally plural (the

(Continued On Page 8)

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title of a book ending in s) was queried for grammar. Interlinear reference was made to a new book that had been published while the manuscript was being held in the editorial office. In my footnotes, accurate transcriptions in German titles of an English name written with the apostrophe were circled in red — apparently out of a belief that Germans never use an apostrophe to spell the genitive case, even of foreign words.

Do you now assume that my paper was being editorially prepared for the press and was returned to me for a final polishing? No, indeed; it was rejected, with remarks on its suitability to a different type of periodical. The article has since been accepted elsewhere, but of course I had to get rid of the first editor's crotches and rubrications by hammering out a new typescript. Unfortunately, the style book of the other journal did not call for a marginal capital.

Postage?

To Mr. Haber's lamentations, I could add another softer sob. Authors have the custom of clipping to the return envelope (instead of pasting) the postage sent with an unsolicited manuscript. I believe no editor has ever stopped to ask himself the reason for this practice; at any rate, I never yet have had the pleasant experience of finding my stamps enclosed with the letter announcing acceptance of an article. I wonder what becomes of them.

J. D. Thomas
Rice Institute

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REGIONAL MEETINGS

R. M. M. L. A. Annual Meeting

The Rocky Mountain A. L. A. devoted one session of its ninth annual meeting, at New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, New Mexico, October 14-15, to problems of teaching. Seventy-five professors and instructors of college and university English, many of them members of the C.E.A., heard the following presentation: Problems and Solutions in the Teaching of (A.) Freshman English, by Lawrence L. Smith, University of Wyoming; (B.) Sophomore Survey Courses, by Norton B. Crowell, University of New Mexico; and (C.) Graduate English, by Paul J. Carter, University of Colorado, read by Henry Pettit, University of Colorado. Levette J. Davidson, University of Denver, briefly described current projects of the C.E.A. and distributed some recent C.E.A. publications and membership blanks.

Using a recent pamphlet of the College Registrars Association, *The Impending Tidal Wave of Students*, as a basis, Professor Smith warned that the next fifteen years will bring many threats to present standards. In order to keep down costs there will be pressure to enlarge class enrollments, to use less well-trained teachers, and to increase the teaching load to more hours per week. These pressures should be resisted by college teachers and administrators, both for personal and educational reasons. They would add drudgery, lower standards, and defeat the liberal arts ideals now praised even by commerce and industry. Larger classes in other fields, such as the social sciences, would increase the trend toward objective, factual testing in place of essay writing and to a decrease in the backing of all of the college or university of the importance of good English to every student. Colleagues, administrators, and the public should be aroused to combat this threatened deterioration of standards.

Professor Crowell pointed out the many factors in our cultural environment and in the preparation of our students that make a humanistic course in literature difficult for both teacher and student. He advocated, however, stiffer standards in such a course designed for both majors and non-majors. The teacher should have a broadly humanistic attitude rather than that of a research specialist.

The paper by Professor Carter urged those responsible for graduate instruction in English to re-examine their objectives after a careful analysis of the present and prospective needs of their students, most of whom are preparing to

teach in high schools or colleges. The historic and traditional pattern of graduate study designed to develop research scholars will probably need radical revision. Most of the candidates for the M.A. degree need much more subject matter and less research method. We must accept their deficiencies and help to overcome them.

Levette J. Davidson
University of Denver

South-Central CEA Fall Meeting

The South-Central CEA breakfast on Oct. 29 at Austin was attended by about 100 persons despite the early hour. Chief topic of the program was "Literature Survey Courses in the SC-CEA Area." A report was presented by Patrick G. Hogan, Delta State College, based on a survey made by himself and Rudolph Fiehler, Southern State College, Arkansas. Mimeographed data were handed to each person present. Rudolph Fiehler, president, presided.

Officers elected for next year: Patrick Hogan, president; Frances Fletcher of Louisiana Polytechnic, secretary; W. B. Leake of Oklahoma A. and M., liaison officer for the several states. The next meeting will be in New Orleans.

Ernest E. Leisy
Southern Methodist University

Virginia CEA Fall Meeting

The meeting of the Virginia CEA on Oct. 22 was a very good meeting, with its climax, perhaps, in Editor Virginicus Dabney's (of the Richmond Times-Dispatch) remarks to the point that we should approach the coming boom in registration with some plan for weeding out the incompetent and unteachable. I should like to see this point taken up by the CEA generally and given vigorous support. Included in the meeting was a panel discussion of "The Problem of Reading," led by R. C. Simonini, Jr. of Longwood College. The luncheon speaker was Frederick L. Gwynn, editor of *College English*.

J. O. Bailey
The Univ. of North Carolina

Southern California Graduate Fellowships

Seven southern California colleges are offering 24 graduate scholarships and fellowships for 1956-57, ranging from \$1200 to \$2000 for programs leading to the MA and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, English and American Literature, History, and Political Economy. Applications must be received before March 15, 1956. Write to Executive Director, Intercollegiate Program of Graduate Studies, Harper Hall, Claremont, Cal.

In an article in *Names* for Sept., 1955 Allen B. Kellogg compares Shakespeare's use of place names with Homer's and concludes that Shakespeare was not so place conscious as some poets. He appears to have been indifferent to matters of local color and of geography unless they furthered his particular dramatic purpose.

Further Proposed By-Laws Change

Bruce Dearing, Chairman of the Committee on Organization and By-Laws, asks to have published the following proposed change added to those already set forth concerning the Draft Version of the By-Laws in the Oct. Critic:

ARTICLE XIII

Disposition of Funds

The corporation shall continue in effect until dissolved or annulled (a) by vote of a two-thirds majority of the members of the association, either present in person or voting by mail, at a general meeting called by the President of the association for the express purpose, or

(b) by action of legally constituted civil authority. In the event of such dissolution or annulment, the assets of the corporation shall be turned over by the treasurer of the association to similar education organizations engaged in the same or related fields of endeavor.

Novelist Attacks Segregation

William Faulkner, speaking to the Southern Historical Association in Memphis, said that continued racial segregation was as great a threat to world peace as communism. He called for a "confederation of the free," regardless of color.

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